



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Michelle Steel, Member**

**3<sup>rd</sup> District – Rolling Hills Estates**

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## **California Taxable Sales Declined 5.9% in 4Q09**

*10th Consecutive Quarter Decline for Taxable Sales in California*

Michelle Steel, Third District Member of the State Board of Equalization (BOE), announced today that taxable sales in California declined 5.9 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009, when compared to the same quarter of the previous year.

Taxable sales in California declined for the 10th consecutive quarter; however, the decline is less steep than during the depths of the recent recession. Fourth quarter 2009 taxable sales totaled \$120.4 billion, \$7.5 billion less than the fourth quarter of 2008 (a decline of 5.9 percent). However, the decline was not as steep as the previous quarter, when taxable sales dropped 15 percent on a year-over-year basis.

Overall, 51 counties in California showed a decline in year-to-year taxable sales, while seven counties had increases. In general, both the Southern California counties and those in the San Francisco Bay Area fared slightly better than the statewide total, as each region declined by 5.6 percent on a year-over-year basis. Conversely, the decline in Central Valley counties exceeded the statewide total, for instance, taxable sales in San Joaquin Valley counties declined by 8.2 percent and the Sacramento area declined by 6.1 percent.

The Southern California region's taxable sales declined by 5.6 percent over the fourth quarter last year, slightly better than the state as a whole (at 5.9 percent). The City of San Diego, the state's second largest city (by population) posted a decrease in taxable sales of 3.4 percent. The City of Riverside's taxable sales also decreased over last year by 4.0 percent. Taxable sales for the City of Long Beach (the State's sixth largest city by population) increased by 3.4 percent.

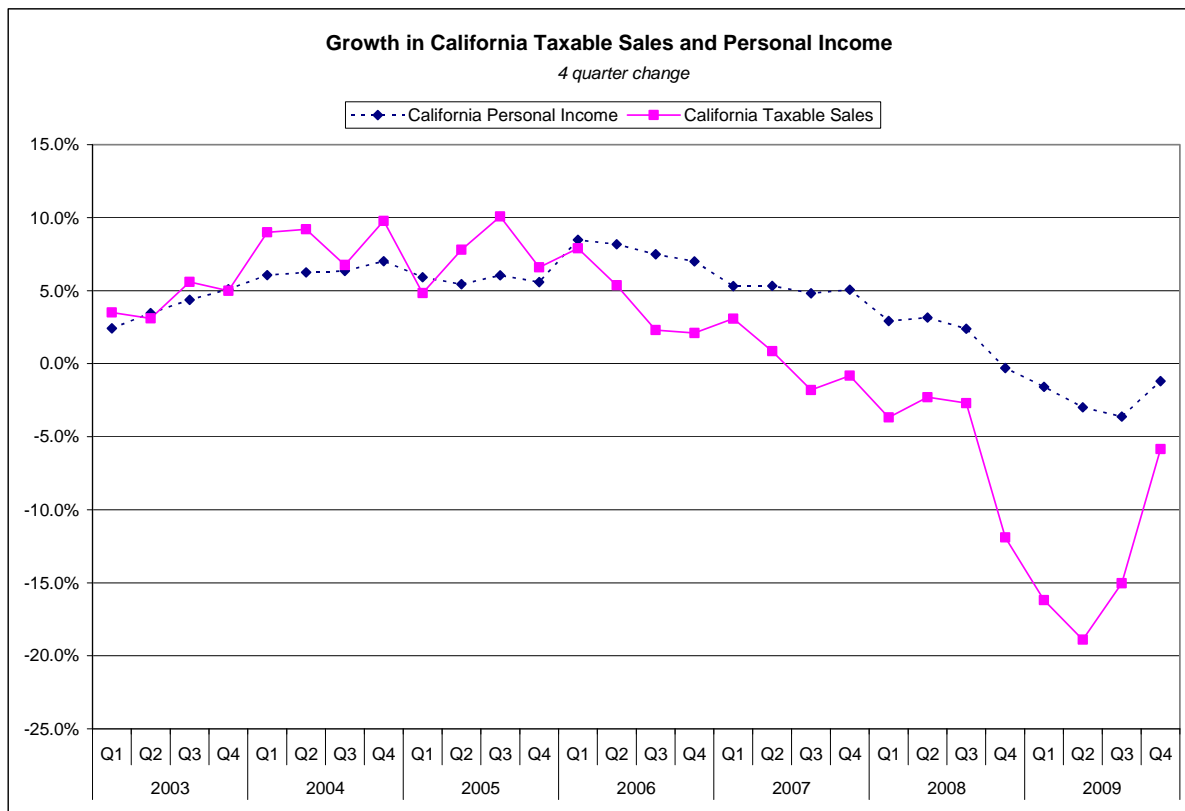
Taxable sales in most of the counties in the Third Equalization District declined in the fourth quarter of 2009 on a year-over-year basis, including the following counties: Imperial County (-15.6%), Los Angeles County (-6.9%), Riverside County (-5.0%), San Bernardino County (-4.2%), and San Diego County (-3.9%).

In constant dollar terms, taxable sales decreased by 7.5 percent over the same quarter a year ago. The California Taxable Sales Deflator increased by 1.7 percent for the fourth quarter of 2009. In comparison, the California Consumer Price Index (CPI) declined 1.2 percent.

Taxable Sales in California is a quarterly report on retail sales activity in California, as measured by transactions subject to sales and use tax. It includes data about statewide taxable sales by type of business, as well as data about taxable sales in all California cities and counties from the first quarter of 2000 through the fourth quarter of 2009 and can be viewed on the BOE website at: [www.boe.ca.gov/news/tsalescont.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/news/tsalescont.htm).

View all Taxable Sales in California for the fourth Quarter of 2009 here: [www.boe.ca.gov/news/tsalescont09.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/news/tsalescont09.htm)

*Editor's Note: Please see attached chart comparing California taxable sales and personal income from the first quarter of 2003 through the fourth quarter of 2009.*



**Notice:** In early 2007, the Board of Equalization began a process of converting business codes of sale and use tax permit holders to North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. This process is now complete; over one million permit holders were converted from the previous business coding system to the NAICS codes. Beginning in 2009, our reports summarize taxable sales and permits using the NAICS codes. As a result of the coding change, however, industry-level data for 2009 are not comparable to that of prior years. Therefore, we will not publish year-over year percentage changes by industry until 2010.

Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$48 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

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